

PIECES OF EIGHT

By Richard Le Gallienne

Being the Authentic Narrative of a Treasure Discovered in the Bahama Islands in the Year 1903. Now First Given to the Public.

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TO THE SHARKS!

Synopsis—The man who tells this story—call him the hero, for short—is visiting his friend, John Saunders, British official in Nassau, Bahama Islands. Charlie Webster, a local merchant, completes the trio of friends. Conversation turning upon buried treasure, Saunders produces a written document purporting to be the death-bed statement of Henry P. Tobias, a successful pirate, made by him in 1859. It gives two spots where two millions and a half of treasure were buried by him and his companions. The conversation of the three friends is overheard by a pock-marked stranger. The document disappears. Saunders, however, has a copy. The hero, determined to seek the buried treasure, charts the auxiliary schooner Maggie Darling. The pock-marked man is taken on as a passenger for Spanish Wells. Negro Tom catches and cures a "sucking fish" as a mascot for the hero; it has the virtue of keeping off the ghost of the pirate who always guards pirate treasure. On the voyage somebody empties the gasoline tank and the hero starts things. He and the passenger clash. He lands the passenger, who leaves a manifesto bearing the signature, "Henry P. Tobias, Jr." With a new crew, the Maggie Darling sails and is passed by another schooner, the Susan B. The hero lands on Dead Men's Shoes.

CHAPTER VI—Continued.

"I can't afford to give you that, Theodore."

"I'd die for dat," he declared.

"Take this handkerchief instead," but, meanwhile, my eyes were opening. "Take this instead, Theodore," I suggested.

"I'd die for dat," he repeated, touching the tie.

His voice and touch made me sick and afraid, just as people in a lunatic asylum make one afraid.

"Look out!" murmured Tom at my elbow.

And just then I noticed hiding in some bushes of seven-year apple trees, two faces I had good reason to know.

I had barely time to pull out the commandant's revolver from my pocket. I knew it was to be either the pockmarked genius or the engineer. But for the moment I was not to be sure which one I had hit. For, as my gun went off, something heavy came down on my head, and for the time I was shut off from whatever else was going on.

"Which did I hit, Tom?" were my first words as I came back to the glory of the world; but I didn't say them for a long time, and from what Tom told me, it was a wonder I ever said them at all.

"There he is, sar," said Tom, pointing to a long, dark figure stretched out near by. "I'm afraid he's not the man you were looking for."

"Poor fellow!" I said; it was George, the engineer; "I'm sorry—but I saw the muzzles of their guns sticking out of the bush there. It was they or me."

"That no lie, sar, and if it hadn't been for that suckin' fish's skin you wouldn't be here now."

"It didn't save me from a pretty good one on the head, Tom, did it?"

"No, sar, but that was just it—it hadn't been for that knock on the head, pulling you down just that minute, that that pockmarked fellow would have got you. As it was, he grazed your cheek and got one of his own men killed by mistake—the very fellow that hit you. There he is—over there."

"And who's that other, Tom?" I asked, pointing to another dark figure a few yards away.

"That's the captain, sar."

"The captain? Oh, I'm sorry for that. God knows I'm sorry for that."

"Yes, sar, he was one of the finest gentlemen I ever knowed was Captain Tomlinson; a brave man and a good navigator. And he'd taken a powerful fancy to you, for when you got that crack on the head he picked up your gun and began blazing away, with words I should never have expected from a religious man. The others, except our special friend—"

"Let's call him Tobias from now on, Tom," I interposed.

"Well, him, sar, kept his nerve, but the others ran for the boats as if the devil was after them; but the captain's gun was quicker, and only four of them got to the Susan B. The other two fell on their faces, as if something had tripped them up, in a couple of feet of water. But just then Tobias hit the captain in the heart; ah! if only he had one of those skins—but he always laughed off such things as superstitions."

"There was only me and Tobias then, and the dog, for the engineer boy had gone on his knees to the Susan B. fellows at the first crack, and begged them to take him away with them. There was no one left but Tobias and the dog and me, and I was sure my end was not far off, for I was never much of a shot."

"As God is my witness, sar, I was ready to die, and there was a moment when I thought that the time had come; but Tobias suddenly walked away to the top of the bluff and

called out to the Susan B., that was just running up her sails. At his word they put out a boat for him, and while he waited he came down the hill toward me and the dog, that stood growling over you; and for sure I thought it was the end. But he said: 'Tell that fellow there that I'm not going to kill a defenseless man. He might have killed me once but he didn't. It's bound to be one of us some day or other, but, despite me all he likes—I'm not such a coward as he thinks me; and if he only likes to keep out of my way I'm willing to keep out of his. Tell him when he wakes up that as long as he gives up going after what belongs to me—for it was my grandfather's—he is safe, but the minute he sets his foot on hand on what is mine, it's either his life or mine.' And then he turned away and was rowed to the Susan B., and they soon sailed away."

"With the black flag at the peak, I suppose, Tom," said I. "Well, that was a fine speech, quite a flight of oratory, and I'm sure I'm obliged to him for the life that's still worth having, in spite of this ungodly aching in my head. But how about the poor captain there? Where does all his eloquence come in there? He can't call it self-defense. They were waiting ready to murder us, as you say. I'm afraid the captain and the law between them are all that is necessary to cook the goose of our friend Henry P. Tobias, Jr., without any help from me—though, as the captain died for me, I should prefer they allowed me to make it a personal matter."

"It's the beginning of the price," said Tom.

"The beginning of the price?"

"It's the dead hand," continued Tom; "I told you, you'll remember, that wherever treasure is there's a ghost of a dead man keeping guard and waiting till another dead man comes along to take up sentry duty so to say. The ghost is getting busy. And it makes me think that we're coming pretty near to the treasure, or we wouldn't have had all this happen. Mark me, the treasure's near by—or the ghost wouldn't be so malicious."

And then, looking around where the captain and the engineer and Silly Theodore lay, I said:

"The first thing we've got to do is to bury these poor fellows; but where," I added, "are the other two that fell in the water?"

"Oh," said Tom, "a couple of sharks got them just before you woke up."

CHAPTER VII.

In Which Tom and I Attend Several Funerals.

When Tom and I came to look over the ground with a view to finding a burial place for the dead I realized with grim emphasis the truth of Charlie Webster's remarks—in those snugger nights that seemed so remote and far away—on the nature of the soil which would have to be gone over in quest of my treasure. No wonder he had spoken of dynamite.

"Why, Tom," I said, "there isn't a wheelbarrow load of real soil in a square mile. We couldn't dig a grave for a dog in stuff like this," and, as I spoke, the pewterlike rock under my feet clanged and echoed with a metallic sound.

"Come along, Tom, I can't stand any more of this. We'll have to leave our funerals till tomorrow, and get aboard for the night"—for the Maggie Darling was still floating there serenely, as though men and their violence had no existence on the planet.

"We'd better cover them up, against the turkey buzzards," said Tom, two of those unsavory birds rising in the air as we returned to the shore. We did this as well as we were able with rocks and the wreckage of an old boat strewn on the beach.

I don't think two men were ever so glad of the morning, driving before it the haunted night. After breakfast our first thought was naturally to the sad and disagreeable business before us.

"I tell you what I've been thinking, sar," said Tom, as we rowed ashore, and I managed to pull down a turkey buzzard that rose at our approach—happily our coverings had proved fairly effective—I've been thinking that the only one of the three that really matters is the captain, and we can find sufficient soil for him in one of those big holes."

"How about the others?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I was thinking that sharks are good enough for them."

"They deserve no better, Tom, and I think we may as well get rid of them first."

So it was done as we said, and carrying them by the feet and shoulders to the edge of the bluff—George, and Silly Theodore, and the nameless giant who had knocked me down so opportunely—we skillfully flung them in, and they glided off with scarce a splash.

Then we turned to the poor captain and carried him as gently as we could over the rough ground to the biggest of the banana holes, as the natives

call them, and there we were able to dig him a fairly respectable grave.

Tom and Sailor and I were now, to the best of our belief, alone on the island, and a lonesome spot it would be hard to imagine, or one touched at certain hours with a fairer beauty—a beauty wraithlike and, like a sea shell, haunted with the marvel of the sea.

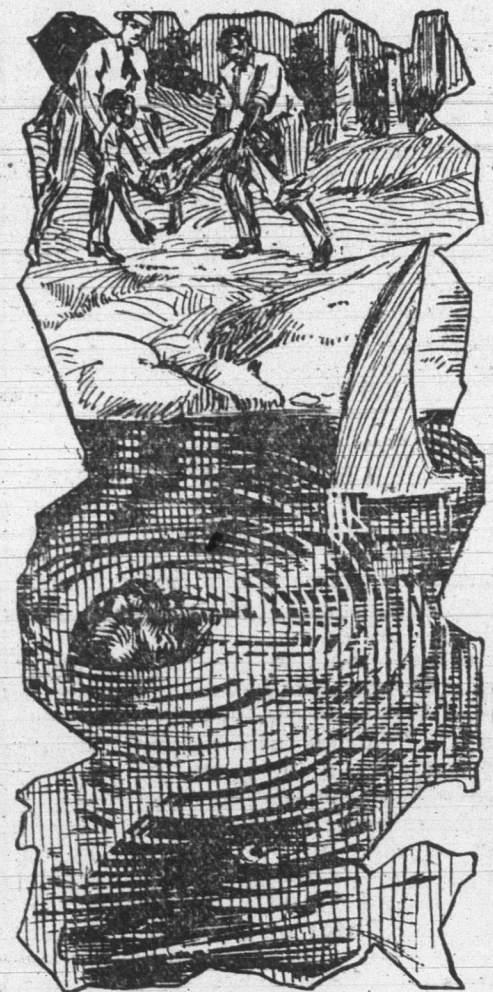
First we went over our stores, and, thanks to those poor dead mouths that did not need to be reckoned with any more, we had plenty of everything to last us for at least a month, not to speak of fishing, at which Tom was an expert.

When, however, we turned to our plans for the treasure hunting we soon came to a dead stop. The indications given by Tobias seemed, in the face of such a terrain, naive to a degree. Possibly the land had changed since his day. Some little, of course, it must have done. Tom and I went over Tobias' directions again and there was the compass carved on the rock, and the cross. There was something definite—something which, if it was ever there at all, was there still—for in that climate the weather leaves things unperished almost as in Egypt.

Sitting on the highest bluff we could find, Tom and I looked around.

"That compass is somewhere among these infernal rocks—if it ever was carved there at all—that's one thing certain, Tom; but look at the rocks!"

Over twenty miles of rocks north and south, and from two to six from east to west. A more hopeless job the



They Glided Off With Scarce a Splash.

mind of man could not conceive. Tom shook his head, and scratched his graying wool.

"I go most by the ghost, sar," he said. "All these men had never been killed if the ghost hadn't been somewhere near. Mark me, if we find the treasure it'll be by the ghost."

"That's all very well," I laughed. "But how are we going to get the ghost to show his hand? He's got such bloodthirsty ways with him."

"They always have, sar," said Tom, no doubt with some ancestral shudder of voodoo worship in his blood. "Yes, sar, they always cry out for blood. It's all they've got to live on. They drink it like you and me drink coffee or rum. It's terrible to hear them in the night."

"Well, Tom," I remarked, "you may be right, but of one thing I'm certain; if the ghost's going to get any one, it shan't be you."

"We've both got one good chance against them—" Tom was beginning.

"Don't tell me again about that old sucking fish."

"Mind you keep it safe, for all that," said Tom gravely. "I wouldn't lose mine for a thousand pounds."

"Well, all right, but let's forget the damned old ghosts for the present."

We decided to try a plan that was really no plan at all; that is to say, to seek more or less at random, till we consumed all our stores except just enough to take us home. Meanwhile we would, each of us, every day, cut a sort of radiating swathe, working single-handed, from the cave entrance. Thus we would prospect as much of the country as possible in a sort of fan, both of us keeping our eyes open for a compass carved on a rock. In this way we might hope to cover up to an inconsiderable stretch of the country in the three weeks, and, moreover, the country most likely to give some results, as being that lying in a semicircle from the little harbor where the ships would have lain. It wasn't much of a plan perhaps, but it seemed the most possible among the impossibles.

Harder work than we had undertaken no men have ever set their hands to. It would have broken the back of the most able-bodied navy; and when

we reached the boat at sunset we had scarce strength left to eat our supper and roll into our bunks. A machete is a heavy weapon that needs no little skill in handling with economy of force, and Tom, who had been brought up to it, was, in spite of his years, a better practitioner than I.

I have already hinted at the kind of devil's underbrush we had to cut our way through, but no words can do justice to the almost intelligent stubbornness with which those weird growths opposed us. It really seemed as though they were inspired by a diabolic will-force pitting itself against our will, vegetable incarnation of evil strength and fury and cunning.

Day after day Tom and I returned home dead beat, with hardly a tired word to exchange with each other.

We had now been at it for about a fortnight, and I loved the old chap more every day for the grit and courage with which he supported our terrible labors and kept up his spirits. Once or twice we had made fancied discoveries which we called off the other to see, and once or twice we had tried some blasting on rocks that seemed to suggest mysterious tunnelings into the earth. But it had all proved a vain thing and a weariness of the flesh. And the ghost of John P. Tobias still kept his secret.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Unfinished Game of Cards.

One evening as I returned to the ship unusually worn out and disheartened I asked Tom how the stores were holding out. He answered cheerfully that they would last another week and leave us enough to get home.

"Well, shall we stick out the other week or not, Tom? I don't want to kill you, and I confess I'm nearly all in myself."

"May as well stick it out, sar, now we've gone so far. Then we'll have done all we can, and there's a certain satisfaction in doing that, sar."

So next morning we went at it again, and the next, and the next again, and then on the fourth day, when our week was drawing to its close, something at last happened to change the grim monotony of our days.

It was shortly after the lunch hour. Tom and I, who were now working too far apart to hear each other's halloos, had fired our revolvers once or twice to show that all was right with us. But, for no reason I can give, I suddenly got a feeling that all was not right with the old man, so I fired my revolver and gave him time for a reply. But there was no answer. Again I fired. Still no answer. I was on the point of firing again when I heard something coming through the brush behind me. It was Sailor racing toward me over the jagged rocks. Evidently there was something wrong.

"Something wrong with old Tom, Sailor?" I asked, as though he could answer me. And indeed he did answer as plainly as dog could do, wagging his tail and whining and turning to go back with me in the direction whence he had come.

"Off we go, then, old chap," and as he ran ahead, I followed him as fast as I could.

It took me the best part of an hour to get to where Tom had been working. Sailor brushed his way ahead, pushing through the scrub with canine importance. Presently, at the top of a slight elevation, I came among the bushes to a softer spot where the soil had given way, and saw that it was the mouth of a shaft like a wide chimney flue, the earth of which had evidently fallen in. Here Sailor stopped and whined, pawing the earth, and at the same time I heard a moaning underneath.

"Is that you, Tom?" I called. Thank God, the old chap was not dead at all events.

"Thank the Lord, it's you, sar," he cried. "I'm all right, but I've had a bad fall and I can't seem able to move."

"Hold on and keep up your heart—I'll be with you in a minute," I called down to him.

A cave, a pirate's bones, a chest and—

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

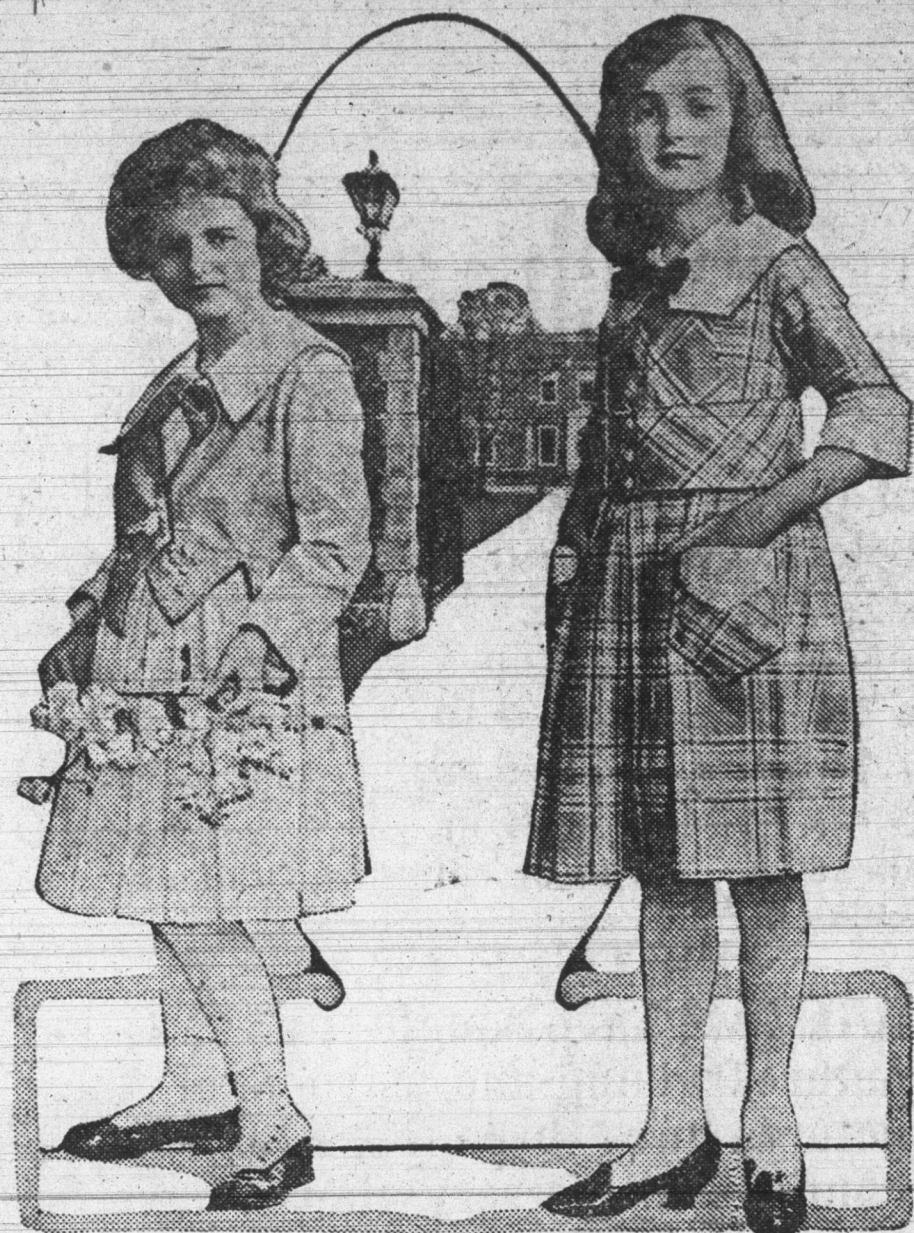
Cure for Rheumatism.

A certain variety of seaweed, known in Ireland as "tope," has been recommended by a famous physician as a cure for rheumatism and throat affections if eaten hot, whilst in some parts of England and Wales a variety of seaweed, known as "laver," has been in demand for years as a vegetable. Served with roast meats it is said to be extremely palatable.

Critic Coins New Word.

Tired of the hackneyed phrase, a "gripping" story, originated by some weary critic and eagerly snatched up by book advertisers, it has remained for a Boston dramatic critic to discover a new term. He has found a play that is "riveting" in its intensity of interest.

Piquant Frocks for Little Girls



Manufacturers of children's clothes have certainly anticipated every need of the little girl, and of the flapper, too, this season. At the beginning, practical cotton frocks revealed that neatness was to be the dominant note in styles for the youthful and, with the advance of the season, sheer midsummer dresses reflected this quality. Designers delight in beautifully finished, simply constructed frocks, not much adorned, but showing careful needlework and, above all, little unexpected and clever touches in making.

Of course there are exceptions to all rules, and the frock for a girl of six, shown at the left of the picture above, is one of those that departs from the rule of utmost simplicity. It has a plaited skirt set to a plain bodice, with turn-over collar and tie and serves as a good background for a novel and pretty little sleeveless

coat, which may be made of flowered silk or wide, fancy ribbon, or of plain colored organdie. The coat is cut into points at the bottom and fastens with one large button at the front, and when a plain fabric is used for making it, simple embroidered designs finish the tabs.

A gingham frock for a girl of eleven, or somewhere near it, shown at the right of the group, is one of many in which white percale or plain chambray are used with gingham, to the advantage of the dress. In this case the collar and cuffs are white, with a finish of fancy stitching in a color. The skirt has plaits at front and back, and a bib and pockets are cut on the bias of the plaid, as in nearly all this season's models. The small cravat tie must not be overlooked, for ties are fifty little items in children's clothes that help give them character. This one is prim and neat and very little-girlish.

For Morning Hours and Country Wear



If the female of the species longs to know in what sort of dress she is most fatal to the peace of mind of man, let her ask a few husbands; adroitly, of course, and not with a bald question. If you ask him what sort of dress he likes best the chances are he can't tell you, but if you ask him what sort of dress his wife wore when he met her or when he fell in love with her, his answer will be enlightening. Gentle lady, the chances are that she was dressed in gingham and doing some useful thing—like sewing on buttons, or dusting the furniture, when she first looked good to him. Or maybe she was walking along a country road or gathering cherries. So here's the simple morning dress, may it continue to flourish!

Two sweet dresses of the simple but effective kind just referred to keep one another company in the picture above. One of them is a smart little gingham, a one-piece frock with straight skirt slightly full at the bodice. It has pockets with an upper portion turned back and fastened down with a button, sleeves that end in a simple band at the wrist and a demure surplice that crosses and has ends that are looped over in the back. This surplice is overlaid with a col-

lar of white batiste edged with narrow crochet or other strong lace. The dress at the left of the picture employs striped and plain cotton in its conspiracy to be crisp and becoming in order to fit in with bright mornings and country ways. The wide girle and front panel, with the lower part of the rounded pockets are all of the plain material. There are any number of striped and plain cottons in lovely colors that are made to go together in these morning frocks. The bodice is fastened with snap fasteners at the left of the panel and with three large buttons at the left side of the girle.

Julius Bottenberg

Cut on Straight Lines.

Gowns cut on straight lines are much affected by smart women this season. At a recent opening not only were the gowns exhibited straight of line, but there were several capes which were straight and narrow. One showed a cluster of deep tucks which encircled the wrap from the shoulder points to the elbow.